

# City Council Minutes

## February 10, 2003

Preceding regular session, Assistant City Manager/Notary Public Linda Hall administered the Oath of Office to appointed Ward 2 Councilor Ken Records. Councilor Records was appointed to fill the unexpired term of Richard Stewart.

The Council of the city of Milton-Freewater met in regular session on Monday, February 10, 2003 at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers of City Hall.

The following members were present: Mayor Key, Councilors Saager, Lyon, Humbert, Woods, Records and Kelley and Youth Representative Ben Colahan. Staff members present were City Manager Delphine Palmer, Assistant City Manager Linda Hall, Police Chief Mike Gallaher and Public Works Superintendent Howard Moss.

Citizens present were Curtis Walters, Merle Sherman, Catherine Anderson and others.

The only member of the press present was Jeff Durham of the Blue Mountain Pioneer.

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS: Included in the consent calendar are both Resolution No. 1919 Authorizing signature with ODOT transferring jurisdiction of Road, and also Council minutes of January 27, 2003 and February 1, 2003. Councilor Kelley moved to adopt the Consent Calendar. Councilor Saager seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mayor Key announced to the audience that this was the opportunity for citizens to approach the council with concerns not on the agenda. None approached.

## NEW BUSINESS:

APPOINTMENT OF PLANNING COMMISSIONERS, BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND LIBRARY BOARD MEMBERS. Mayor Key proposed for the Planning Commission to reappoint Dwayne Gaines, Kevin Riley and Steve Irving as commissioners. Mayor Key proposed for the Budget Committee to reappoint Jennifer Riley, Merle Sherman and Merl Odman as members. Mayor Key proposed for the Library Board to reappoint Roy Carter and appoint Joanna Burk and Father C.H. Gillen. Councilor Saager moved to accept the appointment as proposed. Councilor Kelley seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION 1920, EMPLOYEE PAY PLAN ADJUSTMENT. Assistant City Manager Linda Hall reported to council stating this pay plan adjustment was primarily due to Oregon State's increase of the minimum wage on January 1, 2003. The city's pay plan adjustment increased the Manager, Head Lifeguard, Regular Lifeguard, Instructor, as well the concession workers. Although this is a proposed increase for these positions, they are still less than the

wages in the Walla Walla area. The budget impact is approximately \$4,000.00 over the course of the season depending upon hours the facility is open due to weather. A discussion ensued.

Councilor Humbert strongly felt the need to raise the minimum wage personnel only during this budget year and then on July 1<sup>st</sup> increase the others so as not to have such an impact on this fiscal year's budget. Ms. Hall stated that this would have an impact on the recruitment process due to the already lower wages than the Walla Walla area, and that the City needed to advertise the proposed wages to aid in the recruitment process.

Councilor Kelley moved to adopt Resolution No. 1920 Amending the Employee Pay Plan. Councilor Woods seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

ADOPTION OF FY2004 CITY COUNCIL GOALS. Assistant City Manager Linda Hall stated that on Saturday, February 1, 2003, Council met for a goal-setting session and determined directives for the upcoming fiscal year beginning July 1, 2003. Ms. Hall read to the audience Council's goals, stating the goals were not in any priority. The goals are as follows:

#### REVIVE COMMUNITY NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM

#### PROMOTE CHAMBER VISITOR CENTER

- Explore locale of the "old" library.
- Explore wine sales, frog theme promotions, local art gallery, etc. which will promote our community.

#### PLANNED HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

#### MAINTAIN FINANCIAL STABILITY OF CITY GOVERNMENT

- Explore new revenue sources.

#### PURSUE HISTORIC DESIGNATION FOR CITY HALL

#### CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE RETENTION OF CURRENT BUSINESSES

- Continue funding the URA Small Business Beautification Grants.

A short discussion ensued. Councilor Saager moved to adopt City Council's goals for FY2004. Councilor Kelley seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

#### MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Delphine Palmer said that with the new goals adopted, there would now be a frog-drawing contest.

Ms. Palmer updated council of the 9-1-1 dispatch center issue stating that the issue seems to change almost on a daily basis, but now a person in Medford is pushing for all-regional dispatch centers and also to have this program be a State Agency under Public Safety. If this were accepted, the state would be able to keep all the funds. The City of Milton-Freewater will continue their efforts to keep their center and now the League of Oregon Cities is getting involved. There will be a conference call with the League on this Thursday. Ed Brookshire of Hermiston stated the conference call may serve as well as a trip to Salem. Ms. Palmer further stated that funding has been the issue from the beginning; however, funding seems to be of greater issue now.

Ms. Palmer stated that many were very involved at this time with budget.

Ms. Palmer said that we were now part of the “Amber Alert System” that Sgt. Darren Richman was able to secure a small grant for.

Ms. Palmer said there is a meeting with the Chamber of Commerce on February 19, 2003 to help them determine ways they can become more self-sufficient as the City pays \$50,000.00 currently to the Chamber.

Ms. Palmer said that on Friday she will be meeting with staff from the City of Dayton to discuss a specific process to have the Dinner Train come to Milton-Freewater.

#### COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Saager thanked Public Works Superintendent Howard Moss for the lighted heart on the tower.

Councilor Kelley reminded everyone about the Chamber of Commerce Awards Banquet on February 20, 2003.

Councilor Woods announced that on Wednesday, February 12, 2003 in Salem, Oregon, they will be having “Rural Oregon Day”.

Assistant City Manager Linda Hall wanted to publicly thank Councilor Saager. Ms. Hall stated that after Fire Chief Reynolds resigned, Assistant Fire Chief Saager became Acting Fire Chief and that when City Manager Delphine Palmer offered him his stipend for the extra time and duties, he refused. Ms. Hall felt this needed a public thank you.

Merle Sherman, 716 Pierce, approached council and stated that if anyone hasn't been down North Main where Public Works Superintendent Howard Moss has had sidewalks constructed, please do so. The work in this area went beyond what the merchants expected. Not only are there sidewalks, but trees, flowers and grass. Mr. Sherman said this was a nice addition to the City.

Councilor Woods asked Mayor Key if he needed help with the Recreation Committee recruitment. Mayor Key stated he was still looking for people, that he had called some, but hadn't filled the committee yet.

Catherine Anderson, 315 Elizabeth, attended a meeting of a grassroots organization called Community for Community Facilities (CFCF). She had thought that from the public announcement in the newspaper this meeting would be an open-forum, but during the meeting it became apparent that the decisions had already been made regarding schools both old and new and location versus relocation. During the meeting it was also revealed that both the Rotarians and City Council were 100% behind the idea of a school campus k-12 off-site and that Central School would be deeded to Mac-Hi. Ms. Anderson wanted to know the process of events. Assistant City Manager Linda Hall stated that this organization was self-appointed and the council had no authority over this citizen's group. Councilor Woods stated these events did not have anything to do with the City's governing body. City Manager Delphine Palmer suggested she attend the school board meeting tomorrow night at 7:00 p.m. to address these issues.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

## **February 24, 2003**

The Council of the city of Milton-Freewater met in regular session on Monday, February 24, 2003 at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers of City Hall.

The following members were present: Mayor Key, Councilors Saager, Lyon, Humbert, Woods, Records and Kelley and Youth Representative Ben Colahan. Staff members present were City Manager Delphine Palmer, Assistant City Manager Linda Hall, Police Chief Mike Gallaher and Finance Director Dave Richmond.

Citizens present were Curtis Walters, Merle Sherman, John McMackin along with several students from Walla Walla College, and others.

Members of the press present were Jeff Durham of the Blue Mountain Pioneer, Jeannine Koranda from the East Oregonian and Kathy Korengal from the Union Bulletin.

PRESENTATION. Update from Youth Representative Ben Colahan. Mr. Colahan spoke about several upcoming programs at the high school. Mr. Colahan mentioned a petition at Mac-Hi to beautify the men's restrooms and that the principal is supportive of the idea. Honor Roll students have doubled this year from 6 to 12 students among the senior class. Attendance is a problem-issue at Mac-Hi. On any given day 18.1% of students are absent which translates to 83 students. There are teacher incentive programs that help some, but there seems to be external issues. On March 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Mac-Hi will present "The Millionaires" at 7:00 p.m.

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS: The only item on the consent calendar are minutes from the February 10, 2003 meeting. Councilor Saager moved to adopt the Consent Calendar. Councilor Records seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mayor Key announced to the audience that this was the opportunity for citizens to approach the council with concerns not on the agenda. John McMackin, Walla Walla College Blue Mountain News, approached council to request permission to video tape the taser demonstration. Council denied permission to video within the council chambers, but Hermiston's Police Chief Dan Coulombe agreed to demonstrate the taser gun outside the chamber so they could video the demonstration.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

TASER DEMONSTRATION. City Manager Delphine Palmer introduced Hermiston's Police Chief Dan Coulombe. In speaking with our Police Chief Mike Gallaher, Ms. Palmer felt it would be beneficial to our local department. Ms. Palmer asked Chief Coulombe if he would come to Milton-Freewater to do a taser presentation. Chief Dan Coulombe then demonstrated the taser weapon by first shooting it at a metallic target and then our own Police Chief Mike Gallaher volunteered to participate in a live demonstration. As soon as he was "tased", Police Chief Gallaher fell instantly. Chief Coulombe said the result is instant incapacitation.

UPDATE Legislative changes to STF (Special Transportation Fund) Public Transportation Grant. Assistant City Manager Linda Hall briefed council on a legislative issue concerning our transportation grant program by stating that the City has two public transportation programs. The oldest is the taxi-ticket program which is 33 years old this spring. It serves seniors age 60 years and older along with all ages of our disabled. The range is a five-mile radius surrounding the city limits. A newer program that the City first instituted in the early 90's with a break in service and then began again in 1995 is the City's community transportation bus program which primary purpose is transportation to and from Walla Walla, Washington where it connects with the Walla Walla Valley Transit Transfer Station. The City in the past has had this service supported with Serial Levies. Now these services are supported with user fees along with two grants. One grant is administered through Umatilla County and is referred to as the STF (Special Transportation Fund) grant. This grant has been very dependable and amounts to \$39,500 annually. The other grant comes through ODOT (Oregon Department of Transportation) and is undependable even after the grant is awarded. This grant is called STG funds and is directly administered through ODOT in Salem, Oregon. About two weeks ago, we received a phone call from the Chair of our Umatilla County Transportation Committee, Rollin Reynolds. He expressed his concerns about recent information that Oregon State Senate was introducing a bill, Senate Bill 180, which was being rushed through legislation with very little hearing, and in fact our people went down to speak and were told they were too late, that there may be opportunity to speak later. The purpose of Senate Bill 180 is to recognize all Confederated Tribes or Tribal Nations as Transit Districts. That places them on the same level as Counties. Before, our closest Confederated Umatilla Tribes had to apply for this grant through Umatilla County the same as the City of Milton-Freewater. Now, if Senate Bill 180 should pass, they would become their own district and their funds would be automatic. The loss of funds in the STF grant would be approximately \$7,800. to the those within all of Umatilla County, and in the STG grant the loss would be approximately \$352,000.00. We can't know for sure the results of this legislation, but optimism is limited. If Senate Bill 180 passes, it will probably bankrupt this program this year and then July 1, 2003 one of our City's transportation programs would have to be eliminated and Assistant City Manager Linda Hall said her recommendation to the City Manager to take back to

Council would be to eliminate the bus program and protect the much needed taxi program for seniors and disabled patrons. A short discussion ensued.

## MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Delphine Palmer stated that it seemed like every day the City was receiving notice that this fund would be eliminated or reduced and then that fund. The budgeting process this year will be most difficult and challenging, but we will do our very best to reduce our budget to a manageable level.

The City received notice from the FBI that the City of Eugene, Oregon and also Lane County found their remote communication systems vandalized. The FBI is investigating and has not said whether it is local vandalism or a form of terrorism, but has encouraged other agencies throughout the state to check their communication systems.

Ms. Palmer announced that the City has begun its work in organizing our own Homeland Security System and that she and Assistant City Manager Linda Hall has worked with the emergency notification tree which only requires a maximum of three phone calls for any one individual.

Advertising for the frog-drawing has been done and the drawings are due by March 10<sup>th</sup>.

With our budget situation as it is, Ms. Palmer has informed all department heads that there will not be any conferences outside of Oregon or our surrounding areas.

Our library will be closed all of March due to setting everything up and moving books. If books are checked from the library now, they won't have to be returned until April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Ms. Palmer announced that Finance Director Dave Richmond had negotiated successfully to have direct-deposit for our payroll checks. The employees are very excited about this and have Mr. Richmond to thank for all his efforts.

## COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Saager thanked council, the City Manager Delphine Palmer and the Assistant City Manager Linda Hall for offering to compensate him for his services as Acting Fire Chief. Councilor Saager said that due to his position with council, he did not feel comfortable receiving pay of any kind; however, he expressed he would like to make a motion with permission from City Manager Delphine Palmer and Assistant City Manager Linda Hall, to allow \$500.00 monthly to be placed into a special fund for council to spend at their discretion, but solely for youth activities. Councilor Saager further added he had a few favorites namely the restrooms at the Little League field, the skateboard park, the Junior Show and the summer reading program at the library. Councilor Saager made all of the above in the form of a motion. Councilor Humbert seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Councilor Woods asked about the Fire Chief recruitment. City Manager Palmer and Assistant City Manager Linda Hall both announced that after reviewing job responsibilities, the recruitment would begin after April 1, 2003.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Lewis S. Key, Mayor